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# THE PIANO-PLAYER REVIEW.

A MONTHLY  
MUSICAL JOURNAL FOR  
USERS OF PIANO-PLAYERS.

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Vol. 1. No. 1. September, 1912.



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# The Piano-Player Review

No. 1. SEPTEMBER, 1912.

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## FOREWORD.

THE publication of this new Monthly Journal is the outcome—indeed, the natural result—of the widespread and rapidly-increasing use of the piano-player.

An intensely interesting phase of musical development has followed the invention of the elaborate and ingenious mechanical device whereby the pianoforte can be played without any technical knowledge of the instrument, and it is to foster and carry on this development that the "Review" has come into existence.

While the piano-player, because of its mechanical basis, was at first looked askance at by musicians, and was regarded by many initial users merely as an interesting toy, the barriers of prejudice and ignorance have now been completely broken down, and the artistic possibilities of the instrument having been recognised, its importance as a factor in musical education is now fully conceded. Some people still use the piano-player on its lowest plane, namely, to reproduce automatically pieces of music on a level with the electric piano and the barrel-organ, but the great majority have come to see that, rightly understood, the mechanism which plays the notes is only a new and simple means of giving the individual that control over the keyboard which it takes years of study to acquire in the ordinary way. Put broadly, the piano-player is a new technical medium which obviates the drudgery of the student, and gives everyone with inherent musical tendencies the opportunity to enjoy music of every kind, from the simplest to the most elaborate, and step by step to develop their musical taste to the highest level. In a word, the piano-player is the short-cut to musical knowledge, and the pleasure of musicianship. It does not hinder or suppress in any way artistic expression, and those skilled in its use can allow their individuality full play in the interpretation of music. This being the case, it is obvious that we are face to face with a possibility of musical culture of immense importance, giving ample reason for a journal devoted to the interests of those who play the piano in the new way.

The piano-player has been endorsed by nearly all the leading living musicians; and the idea of this journal has been warmly approved by those to whom it has been possible to explain its aim. As an example, we may quote from a letter sent to the Editor by MR. LANDON RONALD, the well-known conductor, and Principal of the Guildhall School of Music. He says:—

“ I wish your undertaking every success. I have the greatest belief in the utility of piano-players. I think they have done more to spread the love of good music during the last ten years than anything else. They bring within the reach of the beginner the great classical master-pieces, and as an educative force I consider them of the highest importance.”

Thousands of people possess a piano-player at the present time, and it is the aim of this journal to help them to realise its fullest possibilities as an artistic medium. We want to tell owners of piano-players all about their instruments, and how to get the best out of them. To this end we have arranged for contributions from musicians pure and simple, and also from experts skilled in the mechanism of the piano-player and in the playing of it. It is significant that in some cases the two qualities are comprised in the same individual. No user of a piano-player would be wise to ignore this publication, because whatever stage of development he has reached he will find something interesting and instructive for his perusal. This first number will show the general character and scope of the “ Review,” which, its promoters feel, will supply a real want, and become a not unimportant factor in the musical journalism of the day.

Mr. Ernest Newman, the eminent music critic, in “ A Plea for the Piano-player,” puts the case for the instrument with a force and enthusiasm which, we think, must carry conviction to unprejudiced minds. The point we would emphasise is that the piano-player demands from the performer technical ability of a new kind, which derives in large part from the same musical sensitiveness which is the basis of all instrumental playing. Granted a certain minimum

knowledge of piano-player mechanism the quality of the performance will always be in direct ratio to the performer's musicianship. There are as many grades of perfection possible in playing the piano-player as there are in playing the pianoforte, though they are not so obvious to the unmusical person. Our appeal to the users of the piano-player to develop their musicianship is, therefore, well grounded. It is quite certain that, before many years have elapsed, the piano-player will be taught in the same way, according to its peculiar requirements, as the pianoforte is at the present time. There is just as much reason why it should be *taught*. We devoutly hope, for the musical future of the nation, that the piano-player teacher will have a little clearer notion of what the art of music is, than nine-tenths of our pianoforte teachers of to-day, because our need is not for people who can manipulate instruments with a certain degree of proficiency, but for people who have developed, over the widest possible range, their musical sensibility. So, this journal would have a vitally wrong limitation if it sought merely to encourage proficiency in the manipulation of the piano-player, and a knowledge of its interior mechanism. To achieve so much is but the physical basis of the musical development which the piano-player makes possible in a new, speedy and, from the first, interesting manner.

Many channels are open, of course, to the student of music, and there exist many journals more or less devoted to musical culture. But there does not exist any journal, other than this, looking at musical culture exclusively from what we may call the piano-player point of view. In all that we publish in this "Review" we shall have the user of the piano-player in mind. Articles may appear which seem to have little enough special connection with the piano-player as such, but they will always have a direct bearing on our attempt to cultivate musical taste through the new medium. Thus, in this number, Mr. Landon Ronald has a few words to say about the art of conducting, which is the interpretation of music in its most complex form. The student, with his piano-player, needs to take an interest in orchestral music and the processes by which the written



score is conveyed to the ear of an audience. It is one of the conspicuous advantages of the piano-player that elaborate arrangements of orchestral music can be played by it with ease and certainty. But they must be handled with an intelligence based on knowledge of the music, and a sympathetic appreciation of the interpreter's (*i.e.*, conductor's) part in orchestral music. Further, a piano-player student playing orchestral transcriptions should understand the composition of an orchestra, and the functions of the different sections. Of these matters we shall treat in due course.

In this number, also, will be found the first of a series of articles dealing with the lives and musical output of famous musicians. The *raison d'être* of these articles is that we assume in our readers the normal interest—which it is, indeed, essential they should have—in the men who have made great music, and the particular qualities and relative importance of that music. As time goes on we shall deal with many composers, and a wide variety of music, prescribing courses of pleasant study for the user of the piano-player, and suggesting how he may become an experienced man of the world of music.

Other features of this first issue are, we take it, sufficiently self-explanatory, and obviously useful. One point to be emphasised is that the "Review" seeks to become a medium of communication between subscribers, and an organ of piano-player *thought*. We are ready to help our readers in every possible way, whether the difficulty be a screw loose in the piano-player mechanism, or a tough nut to crack in the music of Richard Strauss.

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## A PLEA FOR THE PIANO-PLAYER.

BY ERNEST NEWMAN.

### I.

THE commonest complaint against the non-human piano-player is that it is "mechanical." If the instrument could find voice it might, I think, retort with a *tu quoque* on the pianist or violinist or organist who so describes it. The piano-player, in fact, needs only the kind of defence—which is half an attack—that the lawyers make on behalf of people charged with libel. "My client," says the lawyer in effect, "did *not* say that the plaintiff was a lying scoundrel; but if he *did* say so, it is true. The plaintiff *is* a lying scoundrel, and we can prove it." So the advocate of the piano-player might say, "This is not a mechanical instrument; but if it is, so is the piano, so is the organ, so is the violin, and so is everything else out of which man makes his music." And an ingenious and well-briefed lawyer could, I imagine, make out a very good case for the piano-player, and take a good deal of the conceit out of the other side.

Does not more than half of the progress of the human race consist in substituting machines for human limbs? The plough, rationally considered, is simply an appliance for digging up the soil infinitely better than the finger-nails could do it; probably primitive man began with his finger-nails, progressed to a bone, then to a pointed stick, and so on to the plough—a step-by-step improvement in mechanics. What is the wheel, again, but a vast multiplication of the strength and speed of merely human legs? What is the gun but a big fist at the end of an arm a thousand yards long? What is the telescope but a mechanical eye with a longer reach than any human eye? What is a ship but a mechanical means of overcoming the stupid fatigue that seems to settle upon waters when anything heavier than itself presses upon it?

"Yes," the objector may say, "but these are scientific or utilitarian matters. We quite admit the function and the indispensability of mechanics there. We deny, however, that they have any such value in matters of art." Has he

ever gone beyond the surface of the question ? I am afraid not. For thousands of years man has been steadily increasing the quantity of mechanism he uses in order to make music, and the quality of the music has improved with the quantity of the mechanism—the improvement, indeed, only being possible in virtue of this increase. As in most other things, far too much superiority is attributed to nature over science and art. If a man wants a really “natural” musical instrument, free from any suspicion of the mechanical, he will just have to whistle with his fingers. If he goes a step beyond that he calls mechanics to his aid. Wagner fondly imagined that Siegfried, his pure, untutored child of nature, was making nature’s own music when he cut a reed and made a pipe out of it. As a matter of fact, Siegfried was using one piece of machinery—a sword—to make another piece of machinery—a shaped reed. And even Siegfried himself had to admit that the noise he made on this too primitive machine was horrible :—

“Auf dem dummen Rohre  
Geräth mir nichts” —

and he had to resort to a better piece of mechanism—a silver hunting horn, made, no doubt, by some Besson of the time.

Where, in truth, is the non-mechanical musical instrument ? Start with the indispensable minimum—say a few pieces of metal or gut stretched across a hollow piece of wood, and plucked by the fingers. Does man stop there ? By no means ! The anti-piano-player Puritans are always horrified at the substitution of mechanism for the hand of the performer ; they miss “the human touch.” Well, string instruments have only become as expressive as they are in virtue of this substitution. Man first of all replaced the finger tips by a plectrum ; then he elongated his fingers, and softened the pressure of them, by means of a bow. The history of the best of the single instruments—the pianoforte—is the record of an incessant piling-up of mechanism. After all, what is a pianoforte, in essence, but a dulcimer ? Why all this elaborate mechanism for the mere striking of a piece of wire ? Why not be satisfied with a little hammer held in the hand ? Simply because the complicated mechanism of the pianoforte hits the wires better than the



hand could do—is, in fact, an intensification of the human hand—as the wheel and the gun are intensifications of the human leg and arm. The anti-piano-player pianist is, in fact, a million removes from mere nature ; he would be helpless without the huge box of mechanical tricks in front of him. In decency and reason, then, he ought to be less vehement against the mechanical piano-player.

If he will meet the piano-player advocate with the candid admission that he himself is largely dependent upon mechanism, his opponent will gladly admit the real advantages the human finger performer has. I strongly protest against the theory that the piano-player permits no infusion of personality into the performance ; it is only people utterly ignorant of the subject who can say that. But I cheerfully admit that for the exceedingly skilled pianist, and, indeed, to some extent, for ordinary pianists, there is a charm in the direct touch of the keys by the fingers that the “ mechanical ” piano-player does not afford. I am not sure that much of this feeling is not the mere gratification that comes from the satisfaction of a long-ingrained habit ; we have become accustomed to “ feeling ” pianoforte music through the particular area of the finger tips that touches the keys, and are not yet quite accustomed to feeling it through the particular areas that control the piano-player levers. Everyone who has used a piano-player for a little while knows that this sensitivity increases enormously with practise ; and it is quite possible that in another generation or so it may be quite a common possession. It is hardly reasonable at present to expect a man who has spent ten or twenty years in developing certain tactile sensitivenesses, and certain correlations between these and the brain, to develop quite another set of them in a week or two. You will get the first-rate piano-player performer as you get the first-rate pianist, by incessant practise combined with a musical intelligence. But I am willing to waive this for the moment, and to admit that, as things are at present, the exquisite and born pianist can do something on his instrument that the piano-player cannot do. Does that, however, invalidate the piano-player ?

By no means. First of all, it is not everyone who has the time—to say nothing of the ability—to become a first-rate



pianist. Why should all these other people be denied the opportunity of having their technical deficiencies made good for them by the piano-player? No doubt one pianist in a thousand has a technique comparable to that of the piano-player, with the advantage of a slightly more immediate communication between hand and soul. But for the other nine hundred and ninety-nine the piano-player affords a technique that they could never develop of themselves. In the second place, it is absurd to suppose that the mechanics of the piano-player will never improve. They are already far beyond those of twenty years ago, and in another twenty years will certainly be better still. That is to say, the medium interposed between the soul of the performer and the ultimate mechanism of the instrument—and it must be remembered that this interposed medium is equally there in the case of the purely human performer—will be bit by bit refined away. To have absolutely perfect technique at one's command is, as every artist knows, the indispensable pre-requisite for artistic playing; only when you can forget your fingers can your brain be perfectly free. It surely stands to reason, then, that the ready-made technique of the piano-player sets the musician's brain free to attend to the purely artistic side of the performance. For my own part I know—to take a definite example—that I would rather hear the difficult accompaniment of Strauss's "Serenade" played by an ordinarily good musician on a piano-player than by nine hundred and ninety-nine pianists out of a thousand; and I fancy Miss Elena Gerhardt is of the same opinion.

If, then, we do no injury to the average man by presenting him with a perfect technique ready made, do we do any injury to the cause of music? Assuredly not. We are really making a more musical person of him. Mr. Bernard Shaw has rightly said that what is wrong with the poor is their poverty. We may say that what is wrong with the non-musical man (not, of course, the un-musical man, who is hopeless) is his lack of music. The appetite for music, like every other appetite, grows with what it feeds on. The plain man does not go much to concerts because he dreads what he calls "classical" music; and he dreads it simply because he knows so little of it. His horror of it decreases

in proportion to his familiarity with it; and what is so likely to make him familiar with it as the piano-player at home or in the school? He begins with a mild and shy flirtation with Schumann or Bach or Debussy, develops a liking for him, and ends with a romantic and imperishable union of hearts. Repetition, repetition, repetition—that is the only way by which the complex in music can be made simple to the ordinary hearer; and the only way by which ordinary non-technical people can repeat performances of a work until they know it is by means of the piano-player. Everyone who has had experience of the piano-player knows that it has led to a great raising of the standard of musical appreciation. Any roll lending library will tell us of people who began with selections from this or that musical comedy, and will now hardly look at anything less than a symphony or symphonic poem. There is the case of the school-boy, in a school where the music master used a piano-player, who wrote home, “Dear mother, we are learning a Brahms symphony. I think it ever so much better music than ‘The Spring Chicken.’” That boy was a symbol of musical England, and of the coming regeneration in which the piano-player will so nobly help.

ERNEST NEWMAN.

## THE EVOLUTION OF THE PIANO-PLAYER.

### I.

[Our contributor has avoided technical terms and detail as much as possible, as we know that the general outline of the subject will be more interesting to the majority of readers.—ED.]

THE history of the pianoforte is too well known to need the briefest outline here, but side by side with the growth or cult of piano-playing by hand many attempts to find a short cut to becoming a performer have been made.

These attempts were almost wholly confined to a shortening of the process whereby the fingers could gain familiarity, if not control, of the keyboard. Hence the "Home Vamper" (I have heard it called Vampire), the "Book of Vamping," "How to Vamp," etc., etc. Also I remember having seen a lurid kind of chart—many coloured as Joseph's coat—"To be placed at the back of the keys." You played the Reds for the chord of C major, the Blacks for the 6.4, the Yellows for the leading chord, and the Blues for the minor 7th, and so on presumably till one became expert or colour-blind. Here I must leave attempts of this nature and get nearer the main subject.

We have to thank the organ builders for the introduction of pneumatic leverage to musical instrument construction. The year 1827 places us then at the beginning of pneumatic leverage in musical instruments; and here it will be useful for me to explain very simply what is meant by this term pneumatic leverage.

A simple experiment will at once save many words. Take a lead pencil and place the blunt end on the centre of your right cheek. Hold it in position at right angles by placing the tip of the right hand index finger on the pointed end. Now close the mouth tightly, and alternately bulge and draw in the cheeks by expiration and inspiration of your breath. You will now get a to-and-fro movement of the pencil, the strength of which movement depends on the amount of air pressure you force into the mouth. The pencil movement will be about 1 inch. Repeat the action of blowing and sucking rapidly, and for the purpose of this article you will understand the principle of pneumatic leverage.



This pneumatic lever is the basis of nearly all piano-player actions to-day. In the year 1827 it was first used in a church organ, by Joseph Booth, of Wakefield, but in the work of that period pneumatic lever was merely used to lift a pallet or lid which admitted or shut off air from the pipes of the organ.

Later (1841) we find another really important development in the use of pneumatics for organs: the extension of pneumatic lever right through from the keyboard to the pipes. This improvement was mainly the work of an Englishman—a Mr. Barker, who went to France to carry out this work, and it was first used in the organ of St. Denis Church, 1841.

Thus, instead of a tracker (piece of wire) connection between the keys and the pallet or valve, we have air pressure actuated by depressing the keys, operating the valve at the other end—perhaps many yards away. This system (tubular pneumatic) is in use in many organs to-day, and is still being used.

I will now ask my readers to establish this idea of the pneumatic lever firmly in the mind, and to follow me in search of the first idea of *mechanical touch*. Hitherto fist or fingers had been used to depress the keys of musical instruments of the keyed variety generally, though doubtless many mechanical methods for ages had been used to produce musical sounds. The barrel-organ (or its itinerant friend the street piano) is the best example of early mechanical touch. Spikes or pins were stuck into a revolving barrel or cylinder in such positions that when the barrel revolved the spikes touched the pallets or valves of the various pipes, causing them to speak, and to play whatever tunes the pins were set for. A modern (fast becoming ancient) example of this is the musical box, with this difference—that prongs of metal are made to vibrate instead of pipes being made to sound. We are still a long way from the piano-player touch!

I cannot tell you who first discovered it, thought of it, or used it, but PERFORATED PAPER sheets for producing music were first patented in 1842 in France. The exact instrument for which this paper was used is not easily discoverable, but certainly 40 years ago it was used for small



portable mechanical organs (organettes). I remember trying to repair one of these hurdy-gurdies for an old mendicant, who used to churn up tunes for coppers in one of the West London suburbs, 20 years ago. As this form of tune-producer was probably the stage from which the complete piano-player was evolved, an outline description will be instructive.

It was made in small cabinet form to place on the table, size approximately 24 by 12 by 8 by 10 in., and larger sizes in proportion, and was fitted with suction bellows, reservoir, scale of harmonium reeds and row of perforations (inlets to the reed chambers) corresponding to the row of reeds, and a spool or winder to take up the perforated music paper after it had passed over the holes. The whole mechanism was operated by means of a revolving crank shaft and handle. As one turned the handle so the bellows provided the suction necessary to produce the tone from the reed, the paper revolved over the inlets to the reeds. While the inlets remained sealed by blank paper no tone could be produced, and obviously the perforations in the paper roll admitting air to the reed chambers when they passed, produced the popular tunes and hymns of the day—the “Old Hundredth” seemed to be the “*pièce de résistance*.”

What a humble origin! Compare the modern player grand piano at 200 guineas with the 30s. organette of, say, 1880. What a very aristocratic offspring! But where and when was this simple mechanism first adapted to the piano? In whose mind this idea germinated I do not know, however much I should like to, but the first trace of a keyboard piano-player is a United States patent in 1860. The first pneumatic piano-player that I can trace was made by a Frenchman in 1863, but was not marketed. Before this date, however, Debain, another Frenchman, manufactured a number of piano-players, but the action was entirely mechanical, not pneumatic, so that I need not discuss the details. Between 1879 and the present day over 600 patents have been taken out in the United States alone in connection with piano-players.

The earliest pneumatic piano-player using perforated rolls of which I can find any record is the “Pianista.” Fortunately I have access to one of these machines, made in

1890, and here again I must set out to describe as simply as possible what it was, what it could and could not do.

The full title first, please Mr. Editor :—

“THE PIANISTA DE JEROME THIBOUVILLE-LAMY.

Seul Fabricante Brevette S.G.D.G.

68 bis and 70 Ruè Réamur a PARIS.”

In appearance this instrument was very like the present cabinet form of piano-player, but of larger, squarer design. The action was pneumatic, but the touch was mechanical—the motive power was the turning of a handle as in the barrel organ. I have said that this instrument was made in 1890, 22 years ago, and to-day the material is just perfect. The delicacy of finish, the clean neat workmanship, the supreme quality of the materials used, stamp the instrument as perhaps one of the finest examples of conscientious manufacturing that this very commercial age has produced. Indeed one feels when examining this instrument that it is pervaded by the spirit of some truly great workman who loved his work, and gave infinite care to the smallest detail, and to whom the commercial spirit of manufacturing was wholly abhorrent.

Instead of the ordinary thin paper sheet with perforations, such as is used to-day, this instrument was made to carry cardboard music in length, packed up into folded squares. The compass was 54 notes. The keys of the piano which the Pianista was placed against were operated by felt fingers similar to those in use on all cabinet players to-day. The music in bundle was placed on a small shelf provided, to the left hand of the Pianista—carried over the top of the instrument and then pressed down on to a number of smooth metal teeth (54 each) corresponding to a note. This set or row of teeth was called a comb. The smooth metal teeth were balanced lightly so that any perforation in the card as it travelled over the comb, allowed a tooth to fall (upwards) into its natural or normal position. This movement of each tooth—by means of a tracker (wire) communicated with its corresponding pneumatic (small bellows about 4 inches long by 1 inch wide), which in turn operated and pulled down a finger of the Pianista and depressed the piano-key thereby. Except for the comb method of touch and the source of

motive power this system, greatly improved and modified, is identically the same system used to-day in all pneumatic players.

But picture yourself at the Pianista turning a handle similar to the street organ pattern, while yards of cardboard unfolded itself, crawled snake-like over the comb, and settled itself in its own comfortable folds again in a kind of bird-cage receptacle on the other end of the Pianista ! The only means of expression was the use of two pedals, one for each foot, which were merely attached to the so-called loud and soft pedals on the ordinary piano.

Here, reader, you can pause and think out the effect of the first mechanical piano-player. Can you wonder that from this kind of beginning grew the mountains of prejudice and artistic horror that the present-day finished product has to break down ?

In my next article I will try to describe the various stages of development from the Pianista up to the ordinary piano-player of about five years ago.

H. C.



## MODERN BRITISH COMPOSERS.

### I.—SIR EDWARD ELGAR.

“ ENGLISH music ” and “ English composers ” are expressions which, until quite recently, were used in artistic circles in a manner significant of nothing but contempt. Since the Hanoverian Succession and the importation with it of the foreign professional musician, the home-made article had so deteriorated in quality that in the early and mid-Victorian period it was easily divisible into two classes :—

- (a) The Academic Class—represented by composers of the type of Sterndale, Bennett, Mackenzie, Parry, Stanford, etc., who turned out serious music deserving of all the opprobrium carried in the epithet “ Conservatoire.”
- (b) The Drawing-room Ballad Class—the chief features of which were the absolute commonplace of the ideas and the pooriness of technique of the composers, and what may be described as the pornographic character of the words.

It is curious to note that while the national product had fallen to such a poor standard, England was to a large extent the happy hunting-ground of the foreign composer, virtuoso performer and entrepreneur.

It is not the intention in this article to enquire into the reasons for the state of affairs described. It is sufficient to note that from the end of the Stewart period until well on into the Victorian era, English music had fallen into disrepute. So long indeed was the native spirit dormant that it became customary amongst musicians of whatever nationality to speak of the English as unmusical—“ Bourgeois ” was the contemptuous expression used in reference to the national soul. A serious study of the history of music in this country goes far to remove the stigma that deservedly attaches to us during the period mentioned, and the achievements of British musicians from the eighties onwards has finally lifted it from our national character. Prior to the Reformation, “ England had a race of Church composers as solemn, as noble, as emotionally religious and as scientific as any that



the world has produced." These were followed by the great Madrigalists, culminating in Purcell.

In the time of Charles II. (to quote a writer in the "English Review" for February, 1909), "in the barbers' shops there hung upon the walls lutes and viols, and when four or five customers were gathered together they were accustomed to beguile their waiting with what was called a 'consort'; for a man who could not add extempore another part to a ground bass was considered to be no gentleman. From the time of Handel the man who could do this received that negative title."

During the latter part of the Victorian reign, however, the creative spirit began to stir uneasily in the trance that had fallen upon it. It was already awake in science, in literature, and in painting, and was throwing off the trammels of conventional formulæ, seeking new modes of expression for the widening vista that spread itself to the artist's vision. Music and the drama as yet were lingering in their stupor; but just as the great Darwinian controversy gave a new impetus to science, so it may be said that the Wagnerian and Ibsenite discussions administered such vigorous shakings in their respective spheres, that the prone spirit was moved to self-assertion.

To-day, although we still draw largely upon continental composers, virtuosi performers and conductors in our music—music is perhaps the most cosmopolitan of the arts in this respect—yet in every department of the art native talent and industry is adding to the national treasury, and in the case of creative artists it may be said without fear of contradiction, to the permanent collection.

The intention in this series of articles is to give a short biographical sketch of the prominent modern British composers, and to attempt a slight critical estimate of their work.

Sir Edward Elgar holds an unique position amongst British composers to-day. The knighthood, which is so often the adornment of mediocrity, in this instance is an honour worthily won, and its bestowal serves to raise the rank to its true significance from the sordid bartering for party purposes into which it has lately fallen.

Born at Worcester in 1857, the son of an organist of a Roman Catholic Church in that city, he was surrounded with an atmosphere of music from his cradle. How far the early religious influences have affected the trend of his thought and his outlook upon life can be judged from his choice of subjects for oratorios. "The Dream of Gerontius," "The Apostles," "The Kingdom" are all religious, and, indeed, all his best work, vocal, choral, orchestral and instrumental, is infused with a romantic mysticism which permeates it, and gives it a tender beauty, like the delicate blue mist of a late September morning. Sir Edward is in no sense an academic musician. Such training as was his seems to have been obtained far from the influence of "the Schools," a fact which should give us cause for profound satisfaction, for it is scarcely conceivable that a sensibility so fine as his could have come unscathed through the routine course that is provided by the teaching institutions. His earliest instrument, we are told, was the violin, but he learnt several others; and his father's connection with the musical life of Worcester must have given him opportunities of acquiring knowledge in various branches of his art which it would have been difficult to have obtained elsewhere. It is said that much of his youthful leisure was spent in studying the scores of the works of the great masters.

For some time (1879-1884) he was bandmaster at the County Lunatic Asylum, and during part of this period was connected with a Birmingham Orchestra. A small orchestral piece of his was played at a Birmingham Concert as long ago as 1883. He conducted the Worcester Amateur Orchestral Society, and in 1885 succeeded his father as organist of St. George's Church. For a period he resided in London, but two years later (1891) returned to Malvern. In 1900, following the success of "The Dream of Gerontius," he received the honorary degree of Mus. Doc., Cambridge. In 1904 the honour of knighthood was bestowed upon him, and in 1905 as a recognition of his position in English music, and in acknowledgment of his early connection with Birmingham, he was appointed to the newly-created Chair of Music at the Birmingham University. One can imagine that it was with some diffidence that Sir Edward consented

to occupy an academic position of this kind, and his period of professorship was doubtless the source of much uneasiness to himself. His lectures to students are interesting as affording a glimpse of his attitude towards contemporary music and musical events. The writer can well recall the storm of protest that was raised by the remark that the piano-player would in time do away with the immense amount of labour that goes to the making of even a moderately good performer upon the pianoforte.

This is probably the first occasion on which the "player" was *officially* recognised, and serves to show that Elgar could see the artistic and utilitarian possibilities of the imperfect instruments of those days. He, at all events, did not share the popular prejudice against the "machine," as it was contemptuously styled, though many of his critics displayed not only prejudice, but ignorance of the capabilities of the instrument.

Another controversial topic touched upon was the question of "Programme" *versus* "Absolute" music—giving his adherence to absolutism as the highest and purest form of art. Mr. Ernest Newman, in the Appendix to his work on Elgar's music, joins issue with him here and succeeds in convicting the composer of inconsistency and bad logic.

Sir Edward resigned the "Chair" in 1908.

*(To be continued.)*



## THE NEW MUSICAL COPYRIGHT ACT.

### ROYALTIES ON PIANO-PLAYER ROLLS.

THE new Copyright Act, 1911, which came into force on Monday, July 1st, brings about many important changes in copyright law as regards musical compositions, some of which have reference to "mechanical contrivances." This term covers the music rolls used in the piano-player, and such devices as gramophone records. There are some elaborate clauses, qualifying the main provision of the Act that the making of such contrivances is a breach of copyright. Where a musical work was published before July 1st, 1912, any person may make such contrivances for its performance on certain terms. He must give notice as prescribed by the Copyright Royalty System (Mechanical Musical Instruments) Regulations, 1912, and must have paid royalties at the rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the ordinary retail selling price of the contrivance, that is to say, the marked or catalogued selling price of single copies to the public or the highest price at which single copies are ordinarily sold. Where, however, contrivances reproducing the same work were lawfully made or placed on sale before July 1st, 1910, no royalties are payable on contrivances reproducing it sold before July 1st, 1913.

Assignments made before December 16th, 1911, of the copyright in musical works published before July 1st, 1912, do not carry the right to make mechanical contrivances for reproducing the works. Where a musical work is published on or after July 1st, 1912, any person may make contrivances for reproducing it, if such contrivances have been previously made with the consent or acquiescence of the owner of the copyright (a consent which may be presumed if the owner fails to reply to inquiries in the form prescribed by the Regulations, and directed and sent or published as so prescribed, within seven days), and if he has given notice and paid royalties as so prescribed. The royalty is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the ordinary retail selling price where the contrivances are sold before July 1st, 1914, and 5 per cent. thereafter, with a *minimum* of a halfpenny for each contrivance or each



work reproduced on a contrivance. The rate may be increased or decreased by the Board of Trade, after a public inquiry, at any time after July 1st, 1919.

Thus, if once an owner of copyright permits a musical work to be reproduced by a contrivance, he is bound to permit anyone else so to reproduce it for what seems a very moderately small royalty. The inevitable result of this is that he will never get more than that rate of royalty from anyone; and he is faced with the alternative of either deriving no income in this way from a work which is his own property, or of allowing it to be reproduced by anyone at a price which may be far less than that which he would obtain by free bargaining.

There is a further provision that no alterations or omissions are to be made unless contrivances with such alterations or omissions have been previously made with his consent or acquiescence, or unless they are reasonably necessary for the adaptation. These last words, to one who is familiar with the limitations of the phonograph record, seem to render the provision almost nugatory; but it may still have some good effect in preventing the injury so often caused to good music by vulgar ornamentation.

As regards musical compositions generally, the term of copyright, henceforward, is the life of the composer, and fifty years commencing at his death. Performing right is no longer separate from copyright, but is merged in it, and it is no longer necessary to go through any formality, or to give any performance or notice for the purpose of reserving performing right. Registration is abolished for all purposes. Power of assignment is no longer unlimited. Anyone can produce a work on payment of a 10 per cent. royalty, after 25 years from the composer's death, or 30 years in case of a work which was copyright before December 16th, 1912. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council also have discretionary power to grant a compulsory license for reproduction or publication at any time after the composer's death if the owner of the copyright is withholding the work from the public. The virtue of this provision lies in the access it gives the public to needed works of art, which from private or commercial consideration were being wilfully "held up." That

this sort of thing can happen is demonstrated by the fact that Wagner's "Parsifal" has been for years restricted to festival performances at Bayreuth. In the future, in this country, if there is a demand for a certain work, the composer being dead, the holders of the copyright cannot deny performance or publication so long as the statutory royalty is paid. There is, however, one extraordinary exception to be noted here. Where the work is a "collective work" no royalties are payable; and, owing to the curious draftsmanship of the Act, a "collective work" includes any work by more than one author, whether done in collaboration or not, and whether the contributions of the authors are distinct or not. Almost every piece of vocal music, therefore, practically speaking, is a "collective work" and no royalties are payable under the above provision, and so is every arrangement of music where the arrangement has been made with such labour and skill as to entitle it to copyright.

## PIANO-PLAYER AND ORCHESTRA.

### UNIQUE CONCERT AT QUEEN'S HALL.

A unique event in the history of the piano-player took place at the Queen's Hall, London, on June 14th last, when the instrument was used to play the solo part in Grieg's Concerto for pianoforte and orchestra. Mr. Arthur Nikisch was the conductor, and the orchestra the London Symphony Orchestra, a combination of rare artistic excellence thus being formed. The concert was given by the Orchestrelle Company, and the type of player used was their Pianola attachment, with a Weber grand pianoforte. The full programme was as follows :—

1. Overture " Rienzi " .....London Symphony Orchestra.
2. Aria, " Taming of the Shrew " (Goetz).....Miss Elena Gerhardt.
3. Concerto (Grieg) .....London Symphony Orchestra & PIANOLA.
4. Fifth Symphony (Tchakovsky).....London Symphony Orchestra.
5. (a) " Verborgtheit " (Wolff) } Miss Elena Gerhardt
- (b) " Heimliche Aufforderung " (Strauss) } with PIANOLA
- (c) " Standchen " } accompaniment.
6. Hungarian Fantasie (Liszt) .....London Symphony Orchestra and PIANOLA.

Conductor: Mr. ARTHUR NIKISCH.  
At the PIANOLA: Mr. EASTHOPE MARTIN.

The appended criticism of the concert has been supplied by a disinterested musician who was present :—

It is too seldom that we get a programme so well balanced as that of the 14th, and one sat down with satisfaction to the programme, as one does to an epicure meal, except perhaps that the thought of the rather startling dish to come (the Pianola) caused occasional uneasy tremors.

An expectant silence, half curious, half fearful, was over the audience when the attendant approached the fearsome new thing for the purpose of making sure that all was in order, and with a laughing aside to a member of the band, a matter perhaps indicating rather than hiding nerves, Mr. Easthope Martin sat down at the Pianola, twizzled on the music-roll and the first notes were heard.

One expected accidents, half-bar differences, lost rhythm, and providence only knew the rest.

Perhaps it was Mr. Martin, perhaps that peculiar kind of nervousness that ever precedes something new in life had got hold of us, but one felt that the conductor, the orchestra, the Pianola-player, were all suffering from this apprehensiveness as to possible disasters. But a change soon came. The perfect technique of the Pianola, the gradual building up of



the crescendos, and the terrific tonal climaxes drove out all but the enjoyment of it. Mr. Martin became the pianist—the fearsome thing didn't exist—and a great noise of applause crowned (and, of course, spoiled) the end of the first movement. The tempo of the second movement was slower than one usually hears it, and missed just that sense of an intense crescendo that one looks for. The rest of the Concerto was untrammelled by hitch or twitch, and brought more noises from the audience than ever. Incidentally it must be awkward to re-roll a perforated music-roll and bow to the audience at the same time, but custom will settle this point of etiquette.

After the Symphony the Pianola interested us again as accompanist to Miss Elena Gerhardt; more than that, it astonished us, not only because it did not lump along, but because it did what we all thought it never could do. It was a medium only—and Easthope Martin played for Gerhardt, and played as a perfect accompanist, and the lovely tones of Gerhardt's voice were free. How many singers ever feel *free*, perfectly, while singing songs like Strauss's "Standchen," with their difficult accompaniments? No trace—not the movement of a muscle, the glimpse of an eyelid—of restraint or irritation passed over the singularly clear countenance of the singer; and comparing the Strauss accompaniment with many that is heard, Gerhardt must have revelled in this freedom. Certainly she sang exquisitely. The singer was recalled again and again—till an encore was obtained.

The Liszt just gave room for the peculiar piano-player effects that the hand cannot do; and perhaps too much advantage of this was taken by Mr. Martin—the whole work having just a taint of "playing to the gallery."

Were the shakes done in the best manner possible, or in certain circumstances is the sledge-hammer shake unavoidable through the pneumatic medium?

Whatever else goes to make beautiful piano playing possible by means of the piano-player, it is certain that temperament tells—and one is inclined to think that the measure of success in performing by this means, is the measure of the temperament brought to bear. The future must bring a chastened mood, serious examination and consideration of the once fearsome thing, on the part of musicians and music lovers. There will doubtless be other concerts of this kind.

## INFLUENCE OF THE PIANO-PLAYER.

### SIGNIFICANT LECTURE AT MUSIC TRADES CONVENTION.

A SIGNIFICANT feature of the British Music Trades Convention, held at Brighton in May, was a paper by Mr. Sydney Grew on "The Development of Player-Pianos, and their Influence on Modern Musical Taste." This was the first time the piano-player had been seriously discussed at a Conference addressed by musicians.

In the course of his Brighton address Mr. Grew said the player-piano existed for him as a very wonderful and very complete musical invention. The most wonderful thing about it was the medium it afforded for the diffusion of musical knowledge.

"By means of the player-piano," he went on, "music is understood, music has got into touch with us, so to speak, in a way that it has never done before, and in a way that could never have been done before, municipal orchestras and guarantors and other means of spreading music notwithstanding. It is the only thing whereby every person of normal intelligence—that means ninety-nine out of every hundred people alive—can for himself or herself actually re-create the inside thoughts of the composers as expressed in the notes. Nothing else can be done like it, and it is one of the features of the twentieth-century art and science that this re-creation, personal interpretative faculty, so to speak, or rather medium, should be developed."

As to the influence of the player-piano on musical taste, Mr. Grew did not think it could have any influence in fostering the creation of music as music. He did not see how it could affect the composer, because the finest player-piano could not encompass more than the orchestra, and, normally speaking, throw out more sound and contain more thought than a great pianist could encompass with his fingers; but the "player" was going to have a very far-reaching influence on the concert pianist. It was going to smash up the tenth-rate man, the poor man, and the charlatan. It was going to enhance the position and help on the develop-

ment of the true and great pianist. It was going to put a stop to the "master" who was content to know ten or a dozen brilliant pieces, for the simple reason that it did not matter how agile his technique might be, he could never get up to a player-piano when the tempo indicator was put over to, say, 130. As all admitted that shallowness and charlatanism in art was bad, they could not help seeing that in that direction the player-piano was going to be for good. On the other hand the player-piano was going to improve the status of the good pianist, because, first, it would make the field clearer for him. It would create an audience for him, and it would set him tasks.

"With regard to the influence on the student," Mr. Grew continued, "it is going to help him in this way. What I want to make quite clear is that the born pianist is not killed by the player-piano. The player-piano is not going to kill the true student, but on the other hand he is going to get an immense amount of help from it. When I was learning the piano I had to practise a piece many weeks before I broke down the technicalities of it, before I got any idea of the music behind the notes. With a player-piano the student can see what he has got to work for. He can put the piece on the instrument and run it through two or three times (very badly, of course) and get an idea of the rhythm, swing, and form, and general outline of it; and he will know from that what detail there is in the whole. There may be some very difficult passage that he has got to work out, and you know if you could see the point you have to reach it is far easier to reach than if you cannot see it. That is one way in which the player-piano will help the student. Another way is, it will give him an insight into more works of the nature he is studying than he could know if only he could play them himself. The student, say, is playing a couple of Liszt's Rhapsodies. If he had the help of the piano-player he could get through the whole nineteen, I think it is. Say he was playing Beethoven's Sonatas, he could play through the lot, instead of half a dozen, with the player-piano. It seems to me the player-piano can do almost as much good as the printed form of a poem does to the elocutionist.

"With regard to the teacher, it is going to affect the



teacher just in the same way as it does the concert pianist. The poor teacher is going to shift—the half-guinea-a-quarter teacher and 15s.-a-quarter teacher, and so forth. In the course of the next ten years that sort of teacher will find a good deal of his or her scope for work gone. It is inevitable, and cannot be helped. But the player-piano will have to be taught. It will have to be taught to children in the beginning, and it will have to be taught to adults—the retired business man, and so forth; and these teachers who are losing their opportunity of teaching people to play ‘The Blue Bells of Scotland’ and Moody and Sankey Hymns will have the opportunity, if they will only seize it and prepare themselves for it, to play Brahms symphonies and Bach fugues on the player-piano. It also means that the organist can play chamber music on the player-piano; it means that the singer can play symphonies; it means that every one who touches upon one branch of music can make himself or herself quite familiar with all other branches. In other words, it will make your specialists in one thing intelligent observers in all things in music, instead of intelligent specialists in one thing only.

“There is a good deal to be said about the art of player-piano playing. People generally can play without any trouble—they have to learn to control it rhythmically and handle the various appliances, and they get good results (and results that satisfy them for a little while); but, after a few months, they want more than that, and I am convinced that in the course of a few years the technicalities of the player-piano will be caught, and established, and outlined, and set forth in a book for the use of students, just as has been done for violin playing and organ playing, and singing.

“The chief qualities of a great player-pianist will be, first of all, that he is a great rhythmist. Rhythm is the basis of music, and the basis of player-pianism will be a thorough, full, and complete understanding of the rhythm of the music. Then, secondly, he will have to be a musician with a very complete sense of form. He must thoroughly understand the structure of music before he can give it its finest interpretation on the instrument; because, if you

just pedal away and leave the instrument to itself, it reduces all music to the same amount of accent and frillings. Then he will have to be a musician very sensitive to contrast. He will have to have a great breadth of mind, because he cannot confine himself to a few pieces like the ordinary interpretative artist ; and he will have to be a person of great musical experience. I consider that what we might call a concert-playing pianist will have to have musical gifts not less, but greater than, those of any other interpretative artist, because nothing on his side will depend on purely accidental gifts—like agile fingers, or a fine voice, or a nice stage-presence.

“ I will conclude by saying what I hinted in the beginning, that the player-piano is a very noble and wonderful invention, and it belongs to the twentieth century quite exclusively ; and it is going to be—and I say this with every sense of what it means—it is going to be the diffusion of musical knowledge as great as the translation of the Bible into English was in the matter of the diffusion of religious knowledge 500 years ago ; or, as Sir Henry J. Wood once said : ‘ It is going to be as great as the invention of printing was to the knowledge of Europe in the days of the Renaissance.’ ”

## THE ART OF CONDUCTING.

BY LANDON RONALD.

Mr. Landon Ronald is the famous Conductor, and Principal of the Guildhall School of Music. His career has had a good deal of the romantic in it. He was something of the musical prodigy as a pianist, and contemplated a career as soloist on the concert platform. For some time he was pianist to the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. He conducted Grand Opera there under Sir Augustus Harris. He then toured with Madame Melba in England and America. Subsequently he took up orchestral conducting seriously, established Symphony Concerts at Blackpool, and Promenade Concerts at Birmingham; went on European tour and conducted the principal orchestras of the world; afterwards formed the New Symphony Orchestra in London.

In the article given below Mr. Ronald shows the importance of the conductor as an interpretative medium. The modern conductor stands to the orchestra as the solo performer to his instrument.

It is only within recent years that a great conductor has been recognised in this country as worthy to be ranked among the most eminent of his profession, and even to-day there exist hundreds and hundreds of people who are unable to differentiate between the man who wags a stick and the artiste who inspires all those around him to feel as he feels, to do what he wills. Fortunately, the great public is just beginning to follow and understand the orchestral conductor's art, owing, no doubt, to the vast quantity of orchestral concerts that are ever being given here under the direction of all the different great conductors of the world. But there are still so many people who are under the impression that one becomes a conductor when everything else has spelt failure, owing to its being the easiest thing to do, and the most fascinating! It is my intention, therefore, to give a very short history of the art of conducting, and further, to endeavour to prove that this particular branch of the art requires more study and more natural gift than almost any other—excepting, perhaps, composition.

Conducting, in the present sense of the word, was absolutely unknown in this country some seventy years ago, although some attempts had been made by Spohr in 1820, at the Philharmonic Concerts, to introduce a baton, an article that the Germans had been using for some considerable time. The responsibility of keeping the band together was entrusted to the principal violin and the man



who presided at the piano ! The former would now and then beat time by tapping his desk with his bow, whilst the pianist would have the score in front of him and fill in chords when the band became refractory or uncertain how to proceed. The results can be better imagined than described, more especially when it is added that for each concert a different leader and a new pianist were engaged. The man to improve this uncertain state of things was Sir Michael Costa, who, after having trained the orchestra at Her Majesty's Theatre to a point of perfection that had up to that time never been equalled, was offered and accepted the exclusive conductorship of the Philharmonic Society's Concerts in 1846. Two years previously Mr. Mendelssohn had visited these shores, and had insisted on standing in front of the orchestra and using a baton, with the result that the following year Moscheles and Sir Henry Bishop did likewise. But Costa was the one who insisted on the present style being adopted in this country, and by all accounts his personality must have been very commanding, as there are many living to-day who maintain that he is still without a rival. This, of course, may be taken with just as much water as is agreeable to the taste !

Having thus shown very incompetently how the present style of conducting came about, I will endeavour to give some of the chief qualifications that are essential before a man can ever hope to become a great conductor. Firstly, he must be an all-round thorough musician. Secondly, he must know the scores of all the works he conducts extremely well, and, if possible, by heart. Thirdly, he must have a good knowledge of the possibilities and distinguishing features of all the instruments. Fourthly, he must have an accurate ear and a good memory. Fifthly, his beat, besides being clear and decisive, must indicate in an intelligible manner the different effects he wishes produced. Sixthly, he must be master of himself and of those under him.

These, then, are some of the most salient features of the conductor's art ; but combined with these there are other natural gifts which are essential, such as magnetism, poetic feeling, a strong sense of rhythm, and, above all, soul ! How many of our greatest composers have possessed these latter

gifts but failed most utterly as conductors, owing to their lacking most of the more or less *mechanical* qualifications I mentioned first? I will cite a few examples. Beethoven, that stupendous musician, was wanting entirely in self-command and dignity. Even before deafness overtook him, his useless gesticulations and ungovernable impetuosity confused and irritated his orchestra to such an extent that eventually they would cease to regard his baton and proceed independently of him—keeping together as best they could.

Schumann, who wrote not only some of the most beautiful music ever given to the world, but also conducted some of the chief concerts throughout Germany during his lifetime, was unsympathetic, nervous, and resembled Beethoven as regards his lack of collectedness and clearness of his meaning. That veritable Jupiter of our art, Richard Wagner, succeeded Costa at the Philharmonic Society for one year, but gave very grave dissatisfaction. Later on, at the Albert Hall, opinions differed so much as to his actual gifts as a conductor that it is quite impossible to come to any definite conclusion. On the one hand we have the strongest evidence of his prowess, and on the other equally convincing proof of his incapability.

I am inclined to believe that, notwithstanding his marvellous knowledge of the orchestra, his wondrous poetic feeling, and his great personal magnetism, his nervous, excitable nature and inability to clearly impart to others what he wished done, prevented him from ever attaining great heights as a conductor. Of course, there have been exceptions to the rule. Mendelssohn and Liszt were both great composers and conductors, but I think I have clearly proved that it is not because a man can write wonderful music that it follows he must be equally great as a conductor. It is rare indeed that the combination is to be met with. Take some of the most famous conductors of the past and present: Mariani, Von Bülow, Facio, Hermann Levi, Lamoureux, Richter, Nikisch, Mengelberg, Sir Henry J. Wood, and many others too numerous to mention. Not one did or has ever written anything of importance that will live.

I have so far only dwelt on the great conductor and what his qualifications are. But there are *bad* conductors—ye gods and little fishes!—and the question is how is the layman to distinguish between the one and the other. Well, the really bad conductor is listless, careless, indolent, and the orchestra will be found to pay no heed to him or his beat. Berlioz says of him: “Except in listening to great works already known and esteemed, intelligent hearers can hardly distinguish the true culprit, and allot to him his due share of blame; . . . and the bad conductor—in presence of the public who would pitilessly hiss a vocal accident of a good singer—reigns, with all the calm of a bad conscience, in his baseness and inefficiency.”

Since Berlioz wrote times have changed greatly, and I do not really think that the bad conductor stands very much chance to-day. The charlatan always has existed, and will probably always do so, but I do think that his chances to-day are 50 per cent. less than they were 50 years ago. And a very good thing, too!

LONDON RONALD.



## HOW TO ACCOMPANY.

This article is written so that it will possibly apply to all forms of pneumatic piano-players. No differentiation of the various levers, devices, patents, etc., can be made for obvious reasons, but special enquiries referring to particular mechanism should be sent direct to the makers of the player, or, failing that, our "Answers to Correspondents" column will be found most useful.—Ed.

To accompany. To accompany perfectly. Two distinct propositions, unless one considers the first always includes the second. However, as there are degrees in most things, I will try to point out the way from one to the other.

There are several absolute essentials to the state of being able to make real use of the piano-player for this purpose. The first is that the control of the paper-turning motor must be (1) instantaneous; (2) easily graduated; (3) unvaried by the amount of air pressure exerted by the blowing; (4) the tempo lever moves easily and without binding or rubbing in its slot; (5) that the motor works smoothly. In short, that your tempo mechanism is in perfect order.

To accompany, the operator must either know every word and bar of the song, and the grouping of notes to each word, or he must sketch them in on the perforated roll. In any case I advise the latter method as being safer altogether.

These, then, are the essentials to the art of accompanying so far as technique goes.

The other essentials to the art of *perfect* accompaniment are bestowed by the gods—a fine musical temperament, a nice instinct for tone colour, and not least, the absence of the desire of so many accompanists to be top dog.

Given the essentials enumerated above, the only difficulty lies in controlling the speed of the playing to *follow* the voice. Not for a moment must the player be allowed to go its own sweet way, but the accompanist must mentally and actually control every chord as the paper perforations touch the tracker bar. To do this one must cultivate a free use of the tempo lever, and I think the best form of practise for this work is to sit down to a light filigree kind of piano composition and exaggerate the tempo rubato idea, to burlesque in fact. Take for instance Air de Ballet Chaminade, Angelus

Roll No. (<sup>cannot</sup><sub>trace</sub>), Pianola No. T65381, Perforated Co. No. 2881, and just see how much intentional variation of tempo you can control, rapid *accelerandos*, broad *maestoso rallentandos*, with long pauses on the final note or chords of the various phrases.

Stick to one roll for a week, playing it three or four times at a sitting, until you know every bar, and can play any part of it in several different ways, and not till then need you attempt seriously to get up an accompaniment.

When you feel sufficiently the master of your tempo mechanism, then take some easy simple song, buy the printed copy, and set to work on the lines I now suggest.

For the purpose of clearly showing how best to learn accompaniments, I propose to take this month that well-known and often-heard song of Lord Henry Somerset's, "The Song of Sleep," published by Riccordi & Co., and hope to progress to more classical works as my readers demand in subsequent papers.

Don't make the mistake of trying to do without the printed copy. Some day, perhaps, one will not be necessary, but in the present stage of piano-players one must have the score.\*

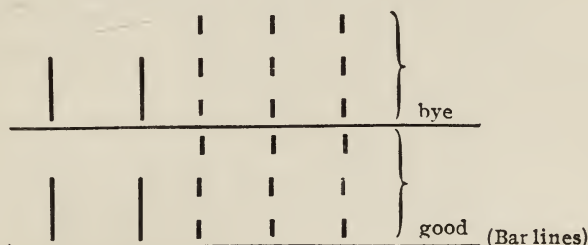
If you are not a musician, get a musical friend to help you: Provide a blue pencil and ruler, count up the chords on the score, then those on the perforated roll, and draw a line right across the roll to correspond with each bar line on the score.

You will find it very easy now to get at the geography of the music. Next pencil or ink in on the roll each word or what words you feel to be necessary, placing the word exactly on a level with the perforations producing the first note or chord which accompanies that word. Complete the roll in this way, and we are then ready for the actual playing.

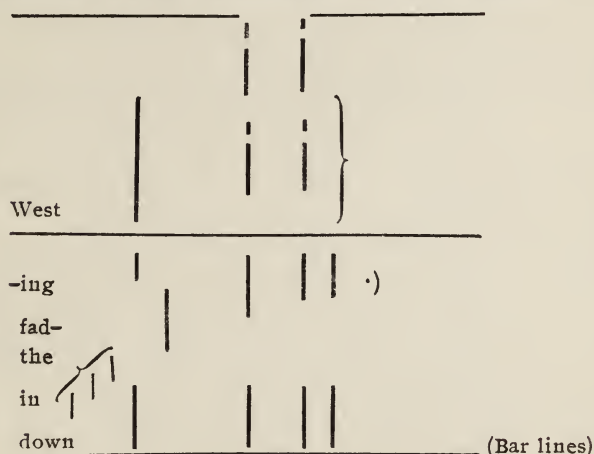
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\* Since the above article was written we notice that the Perforated Music Co. are advertising rolls with the words printed on them.—Ed.

It will make the work clearer if all the notes appropriated to one word (when there is more than one chord or note) are bracketed by a pencil mark like this—



Or like this example from the "Song of Sleep"—



I am assuming that you know the song, or that you have previously run through the roll a number of times, so that you know what is coming.

Place your singer where he or she cannot see the roll moving, and preferably out of your sight. There must be perfect freedom for the singer—no waiting or hurrying to keep the place, it is not at all necessary. If it were I should not waste time in trying to patch up an impossible proposition.

Place your roll in position, and let the paper travel over the tracker bar quite close to the first perforations. Bring your tempo lever over to full stop, mentally place the speed and rhythm, and then begin playing.



WORDS.	First note slight accent as compared with the rest of the bar.
Sleep	A firm note without being lumpy.
dies	Three notes. Take care to <i>follow</i> the voice, if necessary by bringing the tempo lever to full stop on each note.
crimson	On the first syllable the score and roll is marked with a pause $\neg$ . After the chord is struck let the perforation travel to nearly the end and full stop the lever until the voice comes down on the next syllable -on. This note should only just be heard on the piano. Listen
west	for the <i>n</i> of <i>on</i> so that your note for west does not anticipate the singer.
All	A little firmer touch here on the melody ; press out the note from the foot with a gentle, but firm, movement.
quiet	The same holding up as to the word <i>crimson</i> (above).
what tho' the world	Your singer will probably increase the speed. Don't catch fire and go off at a tangent, but listen for the voice, keep a smooth quiet tone
cruel	with a little extra pulse on the word <i>cruel</i> , pausing on the first syllable.
cruel for you and me	A little firmer tone, increased as the notes go down. The four chords to this sustained word must be played on a gradually decreasing pressure, so that each is softer than the preceding chord. Use the sustaining pedal lever on all pause ( $\neg$ ) notes. Again take care that you allow the last perforations to run nearly to the edge, and wait for the complete finish of vocal tone.
the great	Very light note indeed. A group of three to this word ; firm gentle pressure on all three.
shall	Three notes. Each one fairly firm tone and with the voice, probably rather slower.

WORDS.

spirit	Spi—, pause on chord near end of perforations, and come on to the second syllable very softly. Use the sustaining pedal lever with the very soft passages.
Ah ! yes	Don't fizzle the note to <i>Ah</i> —better a little too firm than for the singer to wobble for the want of it.
anguish	First note extra emphasis—not too much or the phrase will become vulgar.
rends	Firm tone ; but don't try to paint the word with a big kick.
heart	Very softly—sustained.
gladness	Accent first note.
far,	Take great care to <i>follow</i> the voice, try and
far	get nearly the same degree of tone to the
apart	second <i>far</i> , as the singer uses, and add the sustaining pedal.
There is a	The roll and score are marked <i>cres.</i> (louder),
God of	but again it will be vulgar if you do more
pity	than get a little firmer tone. Who wants to scream about pity ?
and love !	Probably a little hurrying here on the part of
'tis He	the singer.
knows best	At <i>best</i> let your three chords and the pause $\frown$ chord be each deliberate, each softer, and use the sustaining pedal on the chord marked $\frown$ . The remaining part of the song should be played smoothly and softly.
and	Three notes.) All will need great care, probably
my	Three notes.) a slight holding back on each note.
dear	Your note to this must be firmer, but not a hit.
rest	From here to the end use just enough pressure to make the notes sound. Play each perforation by a separate movement of the tempo lever, and let the tone on the last notes die right away on the sustaining pedal.

[Queries relating to the above are invited, and will be answered in next month's "Answers to Correspondents."]

## THE CARE OF THE PIANO-PLAYER.

### 1.

HAVE you ever seen the inside of a piano-player? If not, and you have a fair idea of mechanics, and can handle a screw-driver efficiently, I suggest that you appropriate a half-day or more for the purpose of examining the various parts of your own instrument. Incidentally I also suggest, as a precaution, that you allocate, say, a sovereign for the purpose of paying your expert to make the instrument playable afterwards!

Piano-player mechanism, however, is extraordinarily reliable, considering the extreme delicacy of many of the parts, and I think this is accounted for mainly by the fact that the principle of suction as against pressure tends towards self-healing of small defects. For instance, supposing that the principle employed was pressure instead of suction, with heavy work each joint, tube connection, bellows, or pneumatic would be more likely to part in possibly weak places than is the case when suction is the active principle. Under pressure a tube connection might easily leak, and the fissure eventually open more and more. Under suction the tube connection is much more likely to seal itself by drawing the joint together, and healing the fissure with particles of dust. A steam pipe subjected to a great pressure from the inside is much more likely to burst, than it would be if the pipe were subjected to the same strain per square inch by suction from within. This self-evident fact should put heart into those owners of piano-players who are nervous, and afraid that very vigorous use may damage the mechanism. It would indeed be a sad time for some of us if our little kiddies were a perpetual menace to the playing condition of "Father's" instrument.

So much for the preamble. Now I will try and bring myself down to the actual mechanism.

My experience (six years a music "treader") is that the chief source of trouble, when there is any, is in connection with the roll-turning mechanism—the motor and gear work. The motor slides should be air-tight, and should travel smoothly and evenly. Grit or dirt of any kind, if it gets



under the slide causes a leakage (and sometimes cuts a groove on the surface), which will have the effect of causing the motor to work unevenly, so that it is not always under perfect control by the tempo lever. Anything that will protect the slides from dust and grit is, therefore, obviously useful. In my own player I have fitted up a kind of mackintosh hood, which prevents dust falling on the slides, and it should not be a difficult matter to rig up something of the kind to protect any pneumatic motor.

It is not within the scope of this article to explain how to repair or make good a damaged motor, but perhaps our Editor will later on find an expert to explain general repair work. The gear (that machinery through which the motor energy is transmitted to the shaft which turns the music-roll) in most piano-players varies somewhat with the make and age of the instrument, but they are becoming of one general pattern. Whatever your gear is it should be kept *carefully* oiled, with good machine oil. That supplied with sewing machines is quite good, and I find is quite thick enough for all bearings; but where one has cog wheels and chains, vaseline rubbed on the chain in small quantities is excellent, and will prevent any noise arising during playing. With a hint for an occasional use of the screwdriver to see that none of the screws in the gear work are becoming loose, we can pass on to the question of dumb notes.

Generally this trouble is only temporary, and is caused by dust, grit, paper fluff, or some foreign body getting down the tubes through the tracker bar, and preventing the proper movement of the pneumatic valves.\* I believe it is customary for a pneumatic pump to be supplied with each instrument for the purpose of clearing these pneumatics, but in any case you ought to have one. They cost about 2s. 6d. The best kind is a double-action pump—the “push-and-pull” idea—forcing down air and then sucking it back again. A once-a-week use of the pump on each perforation in the tracker bar will save a great deal of trouble and annoyance, and probably will also prevent any foreign body getting firmly fixed into the valves. When, in the course of playing

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\* See article on “Evolution of the Piano-player.”

or by use of the test roll, you locate a dumb note, keep on your music-roll, put the instrument at "play," and your tempo lever at full stop, so that the perforation on the bar which is clogged is open to the air. Next exert a good firm air pressure (really suction) by pedalling hard, and while the pressure is on place the pump tube over the aperture, and give three or four vigorous push-and-pull movements to the pump piston. If this does not clear the pneumatics, place a finger over the aperture in the tracker bar, work up the maximum pressure with the foot, and while the pressure is greatest, suddenly withdraw the finger. Repeat two or three times. If your note is still dumb, send a post card to your dealer.

Next month I will write of the care necessary to ensure the best working conditions for the music-rolls, and give some information for the benefit of those readers who delight in a perfect appearance of the polished case.

M. T.

## ON MAKING ONE'S OWN MUSIC-ROLLS.

### I.

WRITERS are innumerable, but it is still possible for men to meet and discuss books without suspecting one another of authorship. A man may even be able to talk about pictures with knowledge and wit ; it will surprise no one to find that he is not a painter. But it almost inevitably makes matter for remark when an intelligent interest in music is met with in somebody who cannot play an instrument of any sort, nor even sing.

No doubt this is to be accounted for in part by the nature of music itself. A non-performing amateur of music is like a blind man with his books—you would scarcely expect to find him well and widely read. Perhaps, too, the prevalence of cant and affectation, which are the chief factors in most talk about music, may have led the plain-going person to a dim judgment that it is not safe to take anyone seriously on this subject, unless he can “show value” by a palpable display of practical skill. But really there is no more connection in the one case than in the others between knowledge and appreciation of the art and practical production or reproduction in it ; and the piano-player will go far to drive this home. For with that there is no limit to a man's power of knowing and understanding music, except the limits of his own nature and of his interest in the subject. Where there is no will there is no way ; but even as to that, and in spite of the element of nonsense in the commercial advertisements, there is, no doubt, a special attraction and stimulus in managing a performance for oneself, which helps to keep alive and develop an interest in music for its own sake.

But here again there is a canting opinion in store for the unwary. To say that “the song is to the singer, and comes back most to him,” is about as true as to say that the table is for the carpenter. Music is made to be heard, as certainly as pictures are painted to be seen, not copied ; and though it is the peculiarity of a work of music that it must be reproduced every time it is to be heard, there is not the smallest reason to believe that the performer finds in it any unique



appeal, which is denied to mere auditors of spirit and intelligence. And whether the song, or the table, "comes back most" to the singer, or the carpenter, will depend upon the singer's good memory, or the carpenter's bad workmanship. There is no evidence of any mystical relation between the player and the music he plays.\*

With a piano-player there is no limit to a man's opportunities of playing music—but obviously they are limited, after all, by the variety of music-rolls extant. At present the full-scale instruments, in particular, are restricted on this account, and for some time to come this handicap must tell very considerably against their value to their users. For 65-note instruments the makers have done very well by comparison; probably they can afford to be liberal. But it is not to be expected that the manufacturer of rolls will ever equal or keep pace with the publication of printed scores; and where a selection has to be made the commercial tendency is to impose too many catchpenny songs and dances of the moment, to be imposed upon too often by pretentious dulness, like Macdowell's sonatas, and to neglect too long the more distinguished, but less aggressive, work, such as Moussorgski's songs (of which only one, I think, has been "cut" as a music roll). The good music of the past is fairly well represented. But most people with tastes of their own will search the catalogues in vain for many things that they know, and more, that they would like to hear. As far as I know, one movement only of all Mozart's string quartets has been transcribed and published for the piano-player—the andante of the C major. I have transcribed for my own use about a dozen other movements from the ten great quartets. Again, all Beethoven's pianoforte sonatas are available; but the delightful Bagatelles (op. 119 and 126) were not added until the spring of this year, and many of Mozart's and Haydn's best works for piano are still wanting. For some time, as far as I know, I possessed the only music-roll versions of Byrde, the composer for harpsichord; and though his "Pavana, the Earle of Salisbury," has now been translated by the Orchestrelle Co., there is much more of him and of

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\* Our Contributor is here interesting but not conclusive. It must not be assumed that his opinions on musical æsthetics are necessarily authoritative.—ED.

his contemporary, Purcell, that I have found well worth the labour of transcribing for myself. One more instance. It is not well enough known that Mozart wrote these fantasias for the mechanism of a musical clock—some eighteenth-century ancestor of the piano-player. What could be more appropriate for translation to a music-roll?—especially as they are fine things in themselves, all three. Yet only one, which is fairly well known in the form of a transcription for the organ, can be bought as a music-roll. I have made rolls of the two others, and play them often; one a most engaging *andante* “for a cylinder in a small barrel-organ;” the other in three movements, first a splendid fugue, full of tune, then a slow movement of the best, and a most exciting finish. It is true that the makers are willing to consider suggestions; and at a price they will make a roll to order from any printed score. But the suggestions are not always taken, and the price they charge for a roll ordered specially is high, about fifteen times the price of an ordinary copy of the same size. (The ordinary prices, it may be noted, are not low, and must involve a proportion of profit.) I have transcribed and cut for myself between fifty and sixty separate pieces or movements, none of them to be had as yet from the music-roll manufacturing companies. If they had been made to my order, I should have had to pay, as far as I can estimate on their published terms, more than £200 for them. As I have made them, they have cost rather less than 50s., including the price of the few simple tools required. Certainly the expenditure of time and attention has been considerable—of more length than many games of patience; but the process is not less absorbing, and the finished rolls remain, and in the playing they are not at all inferior to the machine-made sort.

In a subsequent paper I will describe the methods which I have worked out for making music-rolls by hand, and also for “Themodising”\* the ordinary purchaseable sort, as well as those of one’s own making.

J. H. MORRISON.

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\* By “Themodising” (or Melodising) Mr. Morrison means adding side perforations for accenting purposes.—ED.

## MUSIC NOTES AND NEWS.

THE principal musical event during the London season, ending in July of this year, was the production of the English Opera, "The Children of Don," written by Lord Howard de Walden, and composed by Mr. Josef Holbrooke. This is a most ambitious effort. The libretto is a very complicated story based on ancient British mythology, and the scheme of the opera bears resemblance to Wagner's "Ring." The production had every advantage but did not achieve much success. The critic of the *Times* said: "This production has probably been the most severe blow which the struggling cause of English opera has sustained for many years; for whatever may be said in praise of the ingenuity of the librettist and the composer, the fact remains that in spite of a production on which all possible care had been expended, and in spite of the fact that the score had been placed in the hands of one of the most experienced conductors of the day, the whole thing was quite unintelligible to all who had not spent some hours of preliminary study upon it. . . . One may feel a good deal of pity for Lord Howard de Walden in his effort to tell such a story; but one would feel more if, instead of dressing it up in high-sounding language, mistaken for poetry, he had tried to tell it in simple English. One need feel none for Mr. Holbrooke, who riots through the whole thing, spinning out his intricate orchestral web, revelling in every conceivable complexity, sometimes lighting upon a passage from the 'Ring,' occasionally hitting upon a happy idea of his own, never at a loss for something to do, never having anything important to say. If certain passages strike one as apt to the situation they have to be set against so many which are utterly incongruous that they hardly appear to be more than momentary coincidences."

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Mr. Ernest Newman, in his criticism, poked a great deal of fun at the involved and obscure character of the story, as well at the "extraordinary jargon" of the verse. "Govannion, for example, tells Goewin, 'I am drawn in love of you from high and fimbriate ranges.' In the theatre the plain man asks in wonderment what a fimbriate range is. When he gets home he perhaps looks it up in the dictionary, and discovers that 'fimbriate' is a botanical term meaning 'having the margin bordered by filiform processes thicker than hairs.' Perhaps his respect for Lord Howard de Walden's subtlety rises; he may feel that the phrase suggests infinitely more than it merely says—for how many men are capable of a love sufficient to draw them from ranges having the margin bordered by filiform processes thicker than hairs? But more likely than not the plain man will merely feel that he is being set unnecessary problems, and that there is something wrong with an operatic text that often needs reading twice and thrice with the dictionary called in to help at the finish."



Speaking of the music, Mr. Newman says: "No one, of course, could set such a text to good music, for it is fundamentally unmusical. It is a bad subject to begin with, for not one of the characters explains himself, or gives much opportunity for musical delineation; and probably no composer who ever lived, or will live, could give any melodic or rhythmic shape to Lord Howard de Walden's long and awkward and involved sentences. Mr. Holbrooke at any rate has not been able to do so. There is hardly a vocal phrase in the whole opera that falls gratefully upon the ear, while many of them are distressingly clumsy. The style is declamatory throughout, but it is not even good declamation, for accents are constantly being misplaced, and such melodic line—or pretence at melodic line—as there is does not even emphasise the words. Mr. Holbrooke has plainly done the bulk of his thinking in the orchestra and left the vocal part more or less to fend for itself. But the orchestral tissue, unfortunately, is largely experimental and confused."

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So much for "The Children of Don." We wonder whether Lord Howard de Walden and Mr. Holbrooke will now have the courage to complete the trilogy of which this opera is the first instalment. The prominence given to the name of Mr. Holbrooke makes it interesting to recall that young composer's romantic career. The son of a musician who played the piano in an outlying music-hall, he was sent, at the age of fourteen, to the Royal Academy of Music, where he won several exhibitions, a scholarship, and a prize. He was intended to be a pianist, and he still plays with great technical skill and temperament; but interpretative music did not appeal to him as much as composition. His efforts, however, met with no approval from the authorities; the principal went so far as to say to him: "Your music is horrible. You are on the wrong track, and you will never be able to sell a single copy of it."

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When Holbrooke was seventeen he had to leave the academy to earn his own living. As a frequent deputy for his father he had become acquainted with many of the comic singers at the halls, and they often got him to set their "poems" to music. Hundreds of these comic songs were composed by him, and he scored them for the band for an inclusive fee of 5s. He turned his attention to the theatre as offering the most immediate means of getting a living wage. He started as conductor of a band of ten with a travelling pantomime company at a salary of £1 a week. This did not last long. In spite of the distressing vicissitudes of this nomadic period in the provinces, Holbrooke continued his work with unabated zeal. After leaving the academy he had composed a symphony inspired by "The Raven," the famous poem by Poe, whose work has always exercised a potent influence over his imagination. While travelling with the pantomime he orchestrated "The Raven," and sent it to the late Sir August Manns, then conductor of the Crystal Palace orchestra. Some time later Holbrooke received a letter from Sir August asking him to call. Sir August said many kind things about "The Raven," and had the

orchestral parts got out at his own expense, when Holbrooke told him he had no money. In 1901 the work was produced; it was the first of his orchestral compositions Holbrooke had ever heard. Although not loud, the applause was so persistent that the composer had to go on the platform and bow, making, as one of his critics remarked, "a Raven-like spectacle, in very outre clothes."

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Soon after young Holbrooke began his career as a teacher of the piano, and as time went on his works were produced at some of the great provincial festivals. In 1906 he achieved his first popular success, at the Birmingham Festival, with his setting of "The Bells." His music which has been produced forms but a very small part of the twenty orchestral and twenty chamber works, the five operas and one hundred songs he has written, in addition to some two hundred pieces which have been published—a remarkable fecundity of musical invention in a man who is barely thirty-four.

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While on the subject of romantic musical careers we may appropriately mention the case of M. Fanelli, the son of a native of Bologna. As a youth he earned his living in the cafés as a pianist, migrating, after ten years, to the Paris orchestras. For twenty years he played every night in the orchestras, and none of his colleagues knew that in his desk at home he had masterpieces of music far superior to most of the things they had ever heard. It was only when absolute destitution was staring him in the face that Fanelli, the hidden genius, made bold to approach one of the great musical lights of the day, M. Gabriel Pierné, whom he asked for some work in copying music. He had a wife and child, he said, who depended on him. M. Pierné had compassion on him, and promised him some work. Fanelli incidentally showed him some music which he had written, and which proved that he had a clear hand. M. Pierné looked at the music, and was astonished. It turned out to be a symphony composed by Fanelli himself, who said that it had been written by him nearly thirty years ago. M. Pierné looked over it, and after a few days he told Fanelli that he was going to produce his symphony at the Concert Colonne. The performance took place a few weeks ago, with much success. Of the music M. Pierné has said, "It embodied all the principles of modern music and all the practices now admitted. The symphonic development was remarkable. I could hardly believe that the work had been composed in 1883. I was bewildered. I obtained the Prix de Rome in 1882, but at that time our art was different from Fanelli's. The Russians were unknown to us; Wagner was only beginning to be heard of; yet at that very time Fanelli had preceded us all. He had embodied in his work all the tonalities, the solutions of the ninths and subtle harmonies which have only now become current practice."

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Covent Garden, last season, produced a new opera called "The Jewels of the Madonna," by E. Wolf-Ferrari. It is in the Italian vein. The plot

is a violent story of a girl who rejects her lover, Gennaro, for the fascinations of a young Camorrist, Rafaele, who has vowed that he would steal the jewels of the Madonna for her sake. Genarro is spurred on to dare what Rafaele had only boasted that he would do, and actually brings the jewels to Maliella. She hurries in terror with the jewels to Rafaele in the meeting-place of the Camorrists, is disowned by him, and in despair rushes to drown herself in the sea. Gennaro, denounced by Maliella as the thief, stabs himself in remorse before a painting of the Madonna. The music is often submerged in the melodramatic intensity of the story, but it is generally a mixture of the "realistic" and the conventional melodiousness of the Italian school. The opera is not a very important achievement, belonging, as it does, to a type which is going out of fashion.

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Another opera new to England was produced at Covent Garden on July 4th. This was "Conchita," by Ricardo Zandonai. It is of the *genre* of the modern Italian melodramatic school, and breathes something of the atmosphere of "Carmen" both as regards *milieu* and psychology. Conchita, the heroine, is in the tobacco business. When we first see her she is at work in a factory, and the "local colour" of the setting is "daring." Owing to the heat most of the work-girls have discarded their blouses, and the varying hues of stays make pretty splashes of colour. All the scenes are very animated and realistic in their own way. The story concerns the passion of Don Mateo, a wealthy man, for Conchita, with whom he becomes acquainted while inspecting the tobacco factory with a party of friends. A typically Italian-operatic love-chase follows. Conchita is a creature of just the sort of strange impulses to help an operatic libretto through. She accepts Mateo, who sets her up in a villa. Then she taunts him, and invites a rival into the villa under his nose. The effect of this on an Italian tenor may be imagined. He rages, he Melts, he BURNS. Finally he adopts the process of

"A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree,

The more you beat 'em the better they be."

He gives Conchita a good hiding. He becomes the ultra Petruchio. The lady is knocked down and unmercifully beaten, and thus becomes convinced of the sincerity of Mateo's love, and at the same time adequately trained for her proper position in his household. Shades of "Votes for Women!" The music is full of colour and sensuous melody. At the same time it is symphonic, and a considerable advance on the Mascagni type. The opera is likely to achieve popularity.

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The production, in London, of the recently-discovered "Jena" symphony of Beethoven is now rather old history, but it calls for brief mention here. It was played for the first time in England by Mr. Landon Ronald, of the New Symphony Orchestra, in May last. The manuscript score of the symphony was found by Dr. Alfred Stein, at Jena, and he is able to make out a good case for the work as a Beethoven effort preceding



the first of the famous "Nine" symphonies by several years. There is, of course, a good deal of doubt on the matter. Having heard the symphony performed, we can only say it may quite possibly be the work of Beethoven in his immature period. It might also, conceivably, have been written by Haydn or Mozart.

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The name of Henry Hugo Pierson is very little known in this country as a composer, but Sir Henry J. Wood included some of his works at the "Shakespeare" promenade concerts. Pierson was born at Oxford in 1815, and was sent to Harrow. From Harrow he proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge, intending to take a medical degree. It became evident that music was his destined career. He received his first musical instruction from Attwood and Corfe. He went to Germany in 1839, and at Leipzig had much intercourse with Mendelssohn, and also became acquainted with Meyerbeer, Spohr, and Schumann. In 1844 he was elected to the Reid Professorship of Music in the University of Edinburgh, in succession to Sir Henry Bishop, but he very soon resigned and returned to Germany, which from that time he virtually adopted as his country. "Der Elfensieg" was given at Brunn in 1845, and another opera, "Leila," was brought out with the greatest success at Hamburg in February, 1848. In 1852 appeared his best work, the oratorio "Jerusalem," performed at the Norwich Festival. In 1854 Pierson wrote music to the second part of Goethe's "Faust," which added greatly to his reputation in Germany. It was performed at Frankfort and other places on successive anniversaries of Goethe's birthday. In 1869 Pierson wrote a second oratorio for the Norwich Festival, entitled "Hezekiah," and his last work on a large scale was "Contarini," an opera in five acts, produced in Hamburg in 1872. He died at Leipzig in 1873, and was buried in the churchyard of Sonning, Berks. A Leipzig journal, after speaking of him as a "great artist, whose strivings were ever after the noblest ends," continues:—"Holding no musical appointment, and consequently without influence, highly educated, but, after the fashion of true genius, somewhat of a recluse, and withal unpractical, he did not know how to make his glorious works valued. He showed himself seldom, though his appearance was poetic and imposing; and he was such a player on both organ and pianoforte as is rarely met with."

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Godfrey Ludlow, a young Australian violinist, who scored a marked success at the Queen's Hall, in June, tells an interesting story of his career. "Five years ago," he says, "when I just fourteen, I left Australia to make my name and fortune in Europe. I thought I was a Kubelik then! I started playing the fiddle when I was seven—I made myself an instrument out of a box and pieces of wire. When my mother bought me a seven-and-sixpenny violin I had lessons, and when I was nine I played in public and won a gold medal. Then I came to England with my mother, and discovered I was not yet as good as Kubelik. I went to Prague and studied under Professor Sevcik for four and a half years. When he first heard me play he said, 'You have a soul, but you have no technique. You don't

know yet how to play a scale. You must practise for six hours a day.' At this I thought I should expire! But I soon got on with Seveik, and when he moved to Vienna I was admitted to his 'master-school.' Then he appointed me as one of his assistants, and I earned 10s. a lesson. I have now played before nine of the crowned heads of Europe."

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A remarkable story comes from New York of a Miss Marion Graham, who, at the Columbia University, appeared as a modern Trilby, singing beautifully under a spell cast upon her by a well-known hypnotist. The services of such a hypnotist would certainly be in great demand in this country.

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The latest of prodigies is Solomon, a tiny protégée of Miss Mathilde Verne. Solomon is nine, and has already given a Queen's Hall recital, assisted by Sir Henry J. Wood and his orchestra. The child had a piano with miniature keys, and pedals many inches from the floor. He gave a performance of Liszt's "Hungarian Fantasia," which was wonderful for technical perfection, and was equally good in Chopin's posthumous valse in E minor.

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Paderewski's only appearance in London this season took place at Queen's Hall, on June 17th. In conjunction with the Queen's Hall orchestra he gave a magnificent performance of Chopin's concerto in F minor. He played with wonderful elasticity and rhythm, and all Chopin's wealth of ornament seemed essential as he phrased it. This work, which is seldom heard, is cut for the piano-player, which plays the elaborate ornamentation perfectly, leaving the performer free to incorporate his own ideas of the music.

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Perhaps the most successful of the young British pianists who have made their début this year, has been Mr. F. S. Kelly. He is an Oxford man and was a great athlete. We do not often get this combination in a concert pianist. Most of them are physically fragile.

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To an unmusical judge some of the best of modern music would appear to be merely a noise, but he would probably accept the opinion of an expert that it really was music. The German Imperial Court, for instance, have held that the splendid leading theme of "Ein Heldenleben" is not a "melody"!

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The following criticism of a well-known Italian tenor by a still better known music critic is worthy of preservation:—Anatole France somewhere speaks of a tenor whose voice on certain notes spread itself out like a peacock. The comparison does no violence to the ordinary Italian tenor, but is a little unfair to the peacock, who, after all, can spread out his tail

equally well not only on the top of a wall but on the ground. Signor — certainly has some magnificent notes in his voice, and we are never allowed to forget it. He began his Verdi aria with what seemed an unprrrrovoked and ferrrrocious attack on everrrry R in the worrrrds. The Theatrrrre RRRRoyal has never hearrrrd anything like it. The consonant came out each time like a rrrroll on the kettledrrrrum; it was forrrr all the worrrld like that. In mathematical terrrrms, it was  $r$  to the  $n$ th. By the time Signorrrr — got to the aria itself his consonantal arddourr had abated somewhat; it was forr all the worrrld like that. And when he came to the English song he gave us an encore,—it was an appeal, as far as I can remember, to some young person un-named) to hold-a his hand-a and look-a into his eyes—he was quite me'ciful to the poor letter; it was fo' all the wo'ld like that.

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One of the most remarkable girl pianists that has ever appeared in this country is Fraulein Gyarfas, the thirteen-year-old daughter of a Budapest lawyer, who possesses not only the fine technique befitting a favourite pupil of Professor Hubay, the teacher of Vecsey, but also has the strong, firm, powerful resonant touch of a musician twice her age. Her marvellously strong execution, which has excited the admiring bewilderment of masters all over the Continent, the girl attributes to one thing, and one only—her extraordinary wealth of rich chestnut hair which stretches almost down to her heels.

“I am always going about in dread of the fate of Samson,” she confided to an interviewer. “The great change in my playing occurred about two years ago. I then left Budapest for a six months’ visit to Berlin and Vienna. When I returned my hair had grown so rapidly that it was at least a foot and a half longer than it was when I left Budapest. I had noticed with growing wonder that the strength of my arm increased with every inch my hair grew in length. So you may judge my fright in Vienna when we heard about a wicked man going about cutting little girls’ hair off with a pair of scissors. I used to wear my hair down my back in two long plaits at that time, and one day both mother and myself were followed in the Prater by a horrid-looking man. I thought he was going to cut my hair off. If he did I knew I could never play as strongly again. Since then, when out walking, I have always worn my hair done up Gretchen style on the top of my head.”

\* \* \* \*

Max Darewski will be remembered by many as the child conductor and pianist who astonished audiences in London and in the provinces by his precocious talent. To-day, though only seventeen, he has the touch and facility of a much more experienced artist. His playing of Bach’s Italian Concerto at a recent recital in London was marked by vivacity and power, and he imparted such strength and freedom to a Liszt Rhapsody that he was warmly encored. In some familiar Chopin studies, including the Fantasia in F minor, his interpretations were poetic, and his execution commendably clear.



It is not often that an opera by an English composer is heard in Berlin. Since "Ivanhoe" the privilege has not been enjoyed by any serious British work, though several musical comedies have pleased the Berlin public. The announcement, therefore, that the opera, "Konig Harlekin" (King Harlequin), by G. H. Clutsam, would be produced on September 7th at the Kurfürsten Oper in Berlin, has excited no little interest among musicians. The story of "King Harlequin" is based on a play by Rudolf Lothar, and the scenario is the joint work of author and composer. It is in four acts, and the story, which is a little complicated, is briefly that of the Harlequin of a Court-troupe of Mummers, who murders his master and impersonates him, making use of his new position to preach Socialism. It is, Mr. Clutsam claims, the first Socialistic opera ever composed. The composer says it is quite modern, but that he has tried to avoid unnecessary obscurity. Mr. Clutsam is an Australian and self-taught. He has composed music of all kinds from symphonies to coon songs. His opera, "A Summer Night," produced by Mr. Beecham two years ago, was recognised as the work of a man likely to produce a really good opera some day.

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